



healthcare financial management association

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HFMA Recognizes Gundersen Health System for Contributions to Health Care

(Las Vegas) June 27, 2018 — The Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) presented its highest achievement award to [Gundersen Health System](#), La Crosse, Wisconsin, during HFMA's [annual conference](#) today in Las Vegas.

The Richard L. Clarke Board of Directors Award was presented to Gundersen in recognition of its pioneering work in developing [Respecting Choices](#)[®], an internationally recognized, evidence-based model of advance care planning that creates a culture of person-centered care. Over a 30-year period since creating the program in 1986, Gundersen expanded it and shared it widely. It has become the favored model of advance care planning in more than 130 health systems and medical centers, and with more than 10,000 trained facilitators worldwide.

Respecting Choices helps achieve the Triple Aim in several ways. It improves the patient care experience by better ensuring that patients receive medical management that matches their identified goals. It improves population health by increasing satisfaction of patients and families, reducing “moral distress,” and promoting healthier bereavement. And it reduces the per capita cost of care by identifying and honoring patient choices, avoiding the use of expensive resources that patients don't value or benefit from.

“Gundersen's innovations in advance care planning have revolutionized the field,” said HFMA President and CEO Joseph J. Fifer, FHFMA, CPA. “By aligning patient choices with medical

care they receive at the end of life, Respecting Choices has facilitated the delivery of high-value health care to patients and communities nationwide and beyond.”

Gundersen CEO Scott Rathgaber, M.D., accepted the award on behalf of Gundersen Health System.

“It is an honor to receive this recognition from HFMA. It validates the decades of work by Gundersen Health System, in partnership with countless community leaders and organizations, to bring choice and clarity to our approach to this challenging aspect of care,” said Dr. Rathgaber. “The fact that this program honors patients’ wishes and comforts families, while lowering the financial burden of care, is a stunning example of how cooperation and perseverance can change the landscape of health care. It is an enduring testament to the compassion and dedication of the many people who contributed to this successful endeavor. I am grateful to live in a community committed to improved care for all.”

In 2016, Respecting Choices leaders announced the program's transition from Gundersen Health System to the Coalition to Transform Advanced Care under a long-term agreement, enabling it to fulfill its mission of guiding organizations and communities worldwide to effectively implement and sustain evidence-based systems that provide person-centered care.

Established in 1964, the Richard L. Clarke Board of Directors Award recognizes individuals and organizations that make significant, positive contributions to the profession of healthcare finance or the financing of healthcare services.

About HFMA

The [Healthcare Financial Management Association](#) (HFMA) is the nation's premier membership organization for healthcare finance leaders. HFMA builds and supports coalitions with other healthcare associations and industry groups to achieve consensus on solutions for the challenges the U.S. healthcare system faces today. Working with a broad cross-section of stakeholders, HFMA identifies gaps throughout the healthcare delivery system and bridges them through the establishment and sharing of knowledge and best practices. We help healthcare stakeholders achieve optimal results by creating and providing education, analysis, and practical tools and solutions. Our mission is to lead the financial management of health care.